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ABSTRACT

When the nation of Pakistan was first created, school entrance and civil service examinations were administered in a foreign language--English. A major concern is that enrollment in primary education only increased from 17 percent in 1947 to 48 percent in 1983, with stil a very high dropout rate. National and province-wide boards of education were established to develop curricula and textbooks and to conduct external examinations: (1) Secondary School Certificate or matriculation examination--a gate-keeper to employment, training, higher education, and marriage; (2) Higher Secondary Certificate--for admission to professional schools and universities; (3) an essay test at the high school level--for those competing for government scholarships; and (4) the Bachelor's degree-level examination, taken two years after the Higher Secondary Certificate, used to further screen graduates. Attempts to improve testing have included greater use of objective versus essay tests, internal evaluation of students within each college rather than by external examinations, administering semester rather than annual examinations, and funding for creating new test item banks. In spite of these concerns, there has not been significant change in Pakistan's assessment procedures. (GDC)

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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION PROCEDURES IN PAKISTAN: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE*

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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION PROCEDURES IN PAKISTAN: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENTS

At the time of its creation in 1947, Pakistan `inherited' the system of education that was in existence throughout the Indian sub-continent. Since the system had evolved during British rule, separate from the indigenous institutions often attached to mosques and religious foundations, which were left "undisturbed but unsupported" (Mukerji, 1966), it had strong affinities with the English (1) system, although it had been duly modified to suit local requirements (of the government) and was in some respects significantly different from the authentic English version. For example, in his Minute on Indian Education, Macaulay (1835) had argued that (a) government money should be spent on "the intellectual improvement of those classes of the people who have the means of pursuing higher studies" (p. 241); (b) the British in India had "to educate a people who could not be educated in their mother tongue" (p. 241), and (c) as it was impossible " to educate the body of the people" the government's goal should be "to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect" (p. 249). Thus, at a time when there was a move toward the universalization of primary education in England (Armytage, 1970;

Musgrave, 1968), in India, the focus of the government was on higher education of an elite. Through a resolution of 1844, it was declared that in all government appointments, preference would be given to persons with a knowledge of English; and the Universities Acts of 1857 provided that the universities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, to be created through these Acts, would also conduct an entrance examination for secondary school students. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, School Leaving or School Final Examinations were introduced by the universities. Most of these examinations were also considered to be qualifying (matriculation) examinations for admission to universities, while some merely established eligibility for clerical government posts (Mukerji, 1966). Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that passing external examinations through cramming in a foreign language (2) became the most salient experience for individuals who passed through the formal education system in India.

Both these traditions of education through a foreign language and the control of education through externally imposed examinations, curricula and textbooks have had important implications for the way educational policies and practices, including assessment and examination procedures, have developed in Pakistan. Before I turn to these developments, one more aspect of the legacy with which Pakistan started its existence ought to be mentioned: a participation rate of 17 per cent at the primary education level in 1947. With an annual population growth of 3 per

cent (National Education Policy and Implementation Program, 1979), compounded by an abysmally low share for education in successive national budgets, ranging from 4.8 per cent in 1955-1960 to 3.7 per cent in 1978-1983 (Action Plan for Education, 1983), the participation rate has only been raised "from 17 per cent to 48 per cent during the first thirty-five years of our independence" (Sixth Five-Year Plan - 1983-1988, p. 337). Of the 48 per cent who enroll in class I, 50 per cent drop out before Class V (National Education Policy and Implementation Program, 1979). Therefore, as far as educational growth is concerned, we seem to be trying to go up on an escalator that is moving downwards. (The educational structure in Pakistan, along with percentage distribution by grades at first and second levels of education is given in Appendix I.)

EMERGENCE OF EXAMINING BOARDS

Until 1950, the universities in Pakistan continued to conduct the Matriculation and Intermediate Examinations at the end of Class X and Class XII, respectively. The universities also prescribed the curriculum and syllabus. Faculty from the universities often wrote the textbooks studied by students for these examinations. The National Educational Conference (1952) reviewed the educational scene after independence and focused its attention particularly at the secondary level. The main thrust of its recommendations was to make secondary education a complete stage in itself, rather than as a stepping stone towards the goal of admission to a university. The National Educational Conference

also went on to specify how courses should be diversified at the secondary level, (often echoing the recommendations of the Hadow (1926) and the Spens (1938) reports), to include vocational and technical courses for the majority of students who enter the employment market after passing the Matriculation or Intermediate examinations. As a final step towards the separation of secondary education from the universities, it recommended that Boards of Education should be established to conduct the Matriculation examination.

The first Board of Secondary Education was established at Karachi in 1950, with the mandate to not only conduct the Matriculation examination, but also to prescribe courses of study for that examination and commission the writing of textbooks for it. The universities continued to conduct the Intermediate examination until 1960, when as a result of the recommendations of the Commission on National Education (1960) the conduct of Intermediate examinations was also transferred from the universities to a number of newly created Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education in other parts of the country besides Karachi and Lahore. At present, there are ten Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education in the rest of Pakistan, but in Karachi, due to the large number of candidates, the Board of Secondary Education and the Board of Intermediate Education have been functioning separately since 1974. (3) Boards of Technical Education were also set up in the sixties

to conduct external examinations at the secondary level for technical and vocational courses. There is at present, one Board of Technical Education in each of the four provinces in Pakistan.

CURRICULUM AND TEXTBOOKS

The Commission on National Education (1960) also recommended that the Federal Ministry of Education should appoint national curriculum committees to develop the curriculum for classes VI-XII. The Boards were required to base their examinations on the curriculum developed by the national curriculum committees and approved by the Ministry of Education. They continued to recommend textbooks written according to the prescribed curriculum, and published by the Textbook Boards, which had also been established by the government soon after the creation of the examining boards. In this way, secondary education was formally removed from the control of the universities, but external control of the curriculum and examination remained, only shifting from the universities to the Federal Ministry of Education and the examining boards, respectively. (The functions and responsibilities of government departments and boards are summarized in Appendix II.)

The Curriculum Wing within the Ministry of Education is now responsible for curriculum development and for coordinating the activities of the Bureau of Curriculum in each province.

The function of the provincial Curriculum Bureau is to give `local color' to the curriculum approved by the Federal Ministry of Education. (4) This curriculum is then passed on to the Textbook Board in the province which has sole responsibility for commissioning the writing of textbooks from university and school teachers. All schools are required to teach from the textbooks published and prescribed by the Textbook Boards for classes I-XII. This applies to schools run by the government and the overwhelming majority of schools operated by private agencies, which are affiliated to the Boards of Education in Pakistan, for the purpose of presenting candidates at the Matriculation and Intermediate examinations, known since 1960 as the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examination, respectively. (5) The paper-setters of the Boards (who are officers of the Department of Education and senior headmasters or teachers) are very much guided in their task by how the textbooks interpret the curriculum. Often there is considerable divergence between the lofty objectives of the curriculum and the watered down presentation of material in the textbooks. In fact, the curriculum hardly exists for most of the teachers and students. It is the textbooks that acquire disproportionate importance as they are used by the paper-setters, along with previous years' question papers for setting the new examination papers of the Boards. These papers consist of the traditional essay type questions, with often 100 per cent or

more choice of questions for the students. The inevitable backwash of rote-learning (from the textbooks and `examination notes' which are freely available in the market), selective study (on the basis of `guess-papers' prepared by `experts' in the light of previous years' questions) and what is euphemistically called "unfairmeans" (i.e., cheating) in Pakistan pervades the system at all levels, but particularly when it comes to external examinations.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

The fact that external examinations conducted by the Boards and universities do not stand up to scrutiny as sound measurement-tools, does not diminish their importance or frequency in Pakistan. We still have an external essay-type scholarship examination at the end of class VIII for those who wish to compete for government scholarships, which is somewhat reminiscent of the situation against which Herbert (1889) documented a protest in England a hundred years ago. And, as Madaus and Macnamara (1970) have noted in the context of their study of the Irish Leaving Certificate, in Pakistan also, the Secondary School Certificate examination is used as the sole gate-keeper to the world of jobs, training, higher education, even marriage; while at the same time serving as the most authentic proof of date of birth!

The Intermediate or HSC examination is of particular importance to those students who are aspiring for admission to medical and engineering colleges and universities. For the

small percentage of students who survive to this level (see Appendix I) there is inordinate pressure to get high marks, and all means, fair and foul are used to achieve this goal, as admission to professional colleges and universities is given largely on the basis of HSC marks with some credit for a first division (60 per cent or above marks in the aggregate) at SSC level. Exceptions are also made to the order-of-merit admission policy, for students coming from rural areas for whom the government has prescribed separate `quotas'; but within the quota the total HSC marks are the deciding factor. Admission to other departments in the universities is also on the basis of marks obtained at the HSC examinations. The one exception to this practice is the admission policy of the Institutes of Business Administration which select on the basis of an SAT type aptitude test. Selection for the defense services as cadets is also based on a combination of HSC marks and the Inter-services Selection Board (ISSB) tests.

The next external examination is at the Bachelor's degree level, which students in Pakistan take only two years after the HSC (Class XII) examination. Like most developing countries, the phenomenon of `graduate unemployment' is widespread in Pakistan, also. (Klitgaard & Raffi, 1977). Therefore, a Bachelor's degree is increasingly becoming a requirement for clerical jobs, as it is also the pre-requisite for entry into the civil service, for jobs in business and industry, as well as for higher (post-graduate)

education The `diploma disease with concomitant symptoms of qualification (and grade) inflation is as rampant in Pakistan as it is in the countries described by Dore (1976). Although Dore argues appealingly against this phenomenon of `qualification inflation', even he acknowledges the inescapable need for `sifting', `screening' or `selection', but he thinks that the use of aptitude, rather than achievement tests would `vocationalize' education and make it more meaningful. Whatever means are used in Pakistan or elsewhere for sorting individuals into groups or categories, it seems that assessment procedures of one kind or another have become an integral part of most formal education systems, and will continue to be so.

ATTEMPTS AT EXAMINATION REFORMS

The dubious quality of public examinations and their largely negative influence on educational practice have not gone unnoticed in Pakistan. However, with a literacy rate of 26.2 per cent in the country (Action Plan for Education, 1983-88) the impact of the discussion of these issues on the public forum has been negligible. The major initiative for the analysis of the situation and for a move toward change has come from the government's policy documents and directives. The first official document to consider examination reforms in any detail was the report of the Commission on National Education (1960). Although the Commission's main concern was with structural and curricular changes, two of its recommendations

regarding examinations were a starting point for what has now become a major debate about the place of `objective' (6) testing and internal evaluation in Pakistan. The Commission was concerned about the lack of validity and reliability in the essay type examinations that were being used by the Boards and universities. It recommended that objective tests should be developed to replace or supplement the question papers used in the large scale traditional public examinations. The only significant impact of this recommendation was to create an awareness in educational circles that `new type' examinations may be introduced by the government. Only the Board of Secondary Education Karachi introduced a separate `objective' section of 70 items to some of its question papers for the SSC examination from 1968 to 1972 (Ansari, 1970). The questions were in multiple-choice, matching or completion formats and limited to the knowledge level of Bloom's (1956) taxonomy. This separate `objective' paper was dropped in 1972 by the Board of Secondary Education for the following reasons:

- High cost of conducting two parallel examinations, specially as test scripts were not re-usable and ran into several pages
- Greater scope for cheating in the objective paper at crowded and not too well invigilated examination centers
- Appearance of hundreds of `model' or `guess' objective tests in the market which further encouraged rote-learning.
- low correlations between marks obtained on the objective and essay sections of the papers, with higher marks invariably on the objective paper (Ansari, 1970). This cast doubts on the validity of the objective paper. The validity and reliability of the essay marks was hardly ever questioned.

- Difficulty of maintaining the secrecy of objective papers as they had to be printed in advance outside the Board's premises. The essay type question papers are mimeographed within the offices of the Board just the night before an examination is due to take place, and question papers are distributed to the examination centers an hour before the examination starts. (7) Only a `local' metropolitan Board like Karachi can afford to do this. Other Boards which conduct examinations in remote rural centers deposit their question papers in bank lockers.

Another initiative that the Board of Secondary Education Karachi took in the sixties towards improving examining practices was to introduce centralized assessment of its essay type answer scripts (Report on Centralized System of Assessment, 1964). According to this system, the paper-setter, who is also the head-examiner, prepares a detailed marking scheme at the time of setting the examination paper. Instead of sending 300 to 500 answer scripts to the homes of individual examiners for marking, which is the usual practice in Pakistan, the Board of Secondary Education Karachi establishes assessment centers within the city. Examiners come to these centers to mark twenty scripts each day within three hours, keeping before them the marking scheme prepared by the head-examiner. A deputy examiner is present to discuss any ambiguities in the marking scheme. Centralized assessment is still used by BSE Karachi, but again, this is possible because it's jurisdiction extends only within the city of Karachi and examiners can commute to and from the assessment centers.

For the universities, where the number of students is not so large as at the secondary level, the Commission on National Education (1960) recommended the introduction of a tutorial system

and internal evaluation to be carried out along with the traditional end-of-the-year examination. Twenty-five percent marks in each subject were set aside for internal evaluation to be combined with marks obtained at the final examination for determination of division or pass-fail decisions. It is not surprising that this `innovation' was thoroughly misused. Some students ended up getting 24 marks out of 25 in internal evaluation and only 25 marks out of the remaining 75 allocated to the external examination to reach the magic figure of 33 percent, which is the cut-off point for passing in most examinations in Pakistan. This malpractice was found more often in colleges of low academic standing to boost their examination results. The better colleges, where teachers tried to evaluate fairly ended up with comparatively poorer results than the colleges giving inflated marks for internal evaluation. Like the objective tests of the BSE Karachi, internal evaluation was also dropped by the universities and received a verdict of `not successful' in Pakistan, at least for some time.

The Education Policy 1972-80 (1972) was the next important policy document in which the question of examination reform inevitably cropped up again. The ill-effects of frequent external examinations and infrequent internal assessment were noted in the document. Internal evaluation, carried out at regular intervals by teachers using objective tests was proposed as one of the ways of arresting the declining educational standards in the country. Cumulative records were

introduced in schools for monitoring the performance of students (8) and the semester system was launched at the universities in place of annual examinations. As a result of the official revival of interest in the improvement of examination procedures, a number of reports on the subject appeared in the seventies in Pakistan, some by individuals (Deakin, 1974; Helmick, 1973; Pilliner, 1972) and others by committees (National Committee on Examination Reforms, 1972; Inter-Board Committee of Chairmen, 1974; University Grants Commission, 1975). For the first time psychometric issues of validity, reliability, standardization etc. were discussed in these reports and there was general agreement that Pakistani examination procedures needed to change significantly to meet even the minimal requirements of sound educational measurement. Numerous seminars and workshops were held under the aegis of the Federal Ministry of Education to disseminate measurement concepts and to encourage the participation of teachers and administrators in the new wave of proposed examination reforms. In terms of more tangible outcomes, the following developments have taken place:

- For the first time, funds were allocated specifically for examination reforms in the education budget during the Fourth and Fifth Five Year Plans.
- As a result of the availability of funds, a project for establishing item-banks in the core subjects of the secondary (Matriculation) and higher secondary (Intermediate) curriculum has been underway since 1976. So far, the items that have been written are largely at the knowledge level of Bloom's (1956) taxonomy and no trial testing has been carried out. The purpose of the

item bank is to provide a resource for classroom teachers so that objective test items become known to students and teachers before they are introduced by the examining Boards in external examinations.

- Once again, to counteract the negative effects of external examinations, an attempt has been made to build internal evaluation into the new scheme of studies introduced in 1976 for the Secondary School Certificate examination. Schools are required to test students in Component I (compulsory) and Component II (elective) subjects with teacher made tests every twelve weeks. The marks obtained in these tests are to be entered in the cumulative record of each student. The Secondary School Certificate issued by the Boards on passing the external examination, states that the Certificate should be read in conjunction with the cumulative record maintained by the schools. However, since marks from the cumulative record are not shown on the Board's certificate, internal evaluation is not taken very seriously, either by the schools or by admitting institutions and employers. Already doubts are being cast on the validity of internal evaluation as studies have shown low or negative correlations between internal and external grades (Hasan, 1979). Again, the validity and reliability of the Board's essay type examination is rarely questioned.
- A system of awarding grades rather than marks in the Secondary School Certificate has been introduced since 1976. However, raw scores (which are actually marks awarded on essay type questions) are not converted to a standard scale across subjects or years. Percentage bands for grades have been set somewhat arbitrarily, and in keeping with the time honored tradition 33 per cent remains the cut-off point for passing. (9) Since order of merit, in terms of marks is the main criterion for admission to Intermediate colleges, Polytechnics, training institutions, as well as for employment, subject-wise marks, instead of grades are shown on the Board's mark-sheet (transcript). A grade is shown only for the corresponding total of marks.

The last government document dealing with the question of examination reforms came out in 1979 (National Education Policy and Implementation Program, 1979). The following extended quotations from it summarize current thinking about examination procedures in Pakistan.

> "It has constantly been observed that one of the fundamental reasons for the deterioration of educational standards is the perpetual continuation of an obsolete system of external examinations which encourages learning by rote and subjects the students to various stresses and strains....Public examinations at the end of Class X will be gradually substituted by internal system of evaluation." (p.66)(10)

> "Besides the marks of public examinations, the marks obtained in internal evaluation, along with the results of aptitude and admission tests will also be given adequate weightage at the time of admission [to higher education institutions and professional colleges]." (p. 66)

> "...the inordinate emphasis placed on final public examinations has given rise to many undesirable tendencies and unethical practices in the system of education. ....this examination system does not provide an accurate assessment of the scholastic aptitude of students." (p.66)

It is interesting to note that although the National Education Policy and Implementation Program (1979) is concerned with the "deterioration of educational standards" it does not mention the use of standardized tests or internal evaluation for diagnostic purposes or as management tools to monitor the effectiveness of the vast educational enterprise in Pakistan (Glaser & Nitko, 1971). In any case, no significant changes have taken place in examination procedures in the light of the above statements. The focus in the Action Plan for Education (1983-88) which is the current policy document, is on educational expansion and science education. It does not even raise the issue of examinations.

PROBLEMS OF IMPLEMENTING EXAMINATION REFORMS

It seems to me that the concern for improving examination and assessment procedures in Pakistan reflected in the various reports by Commissions and individuals, has not resulted in any significant change due to the following reasons:

- Failure to translate the policy statements into actual directives for implementation. In a system where policy formulation rests with the Federal Ministry of Education, whilst the financing (11) and administration of education are the responsibility of the Provincial governments, which are continually faced with competing demands for such basic resources as school buildings and teachers, improvement of examination procedures is lowest on the list of priorities, unless it is required by higher authorities.

- Inadequate, or often, no provision of funds either at the federal or provincial levels specifically for improving examination procedures. (12) Much is left to the initiative of the examining Boards or the university Departments of Education as to how much time and money they decide to devote to this activity. Often the extent of commitment depends on the professional predilection of the persons heading these institutions.

- Above all, the absence of an institutional infrastructure to initiate, organize, manage and sustain programs of test development, teacher orientation, and operational use of tests, as well as to carry out the necessary research for monitoring the impact of changes in examination procedures on classroom practices and the education system as a whole. Without an integrated infrastructure, even the funds and know-how that are available within the country or come in the form of aid from abroad are dissipated. The need for such coordination and integration has been stated very clearly in the National Education Policy and Implementation Program (1979):

  "Close liaison will be established with the Institutes of Education, Colleges of Education, National Institute of Educational Research, National Institute of Psychology, University Grants Commission and the public examination bodies to review policies and practices of internal and external examinations for their improvement." (p.68)

  The mechanism for establishing this liaison has not been spelled out and all these bodies continue to work without having much impact on the actual examination practices in the country.

- Ineffective programs of teacher preparation (lasting only nine months) which fail to develop professionalism generally, and devote particularly little time, if any at all, to the teaching of measurement concepts and methods.

- Vast regional (rural-urban) and socio-economic disparities within the country which make educational provision extremely uneven. Government support is usually provided for those changes only which can be implemented throughout the country. Improvements in examination procedures do not fall in this category at present

CONCLUSION: PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Despite the absence of any large-scale projects for examination reforms on a national level, different examining Boards in the country are very much concerned with improving their assessment procedures; not so much because of any commitment to measurement principles as due to the growing credibility gap between the public and the Boards, as well as due to the demand for accountability. Scrutiny of examination scripts even for re-totaling shows up adding errors, often to the disadvantage of students, and these are corrected by the Boards. However, re-examining the scripts, that is, changing the marks given by the original examiner, is not allowed under the existing rules of examination, although sometimes a number of examiners agree that a script has been under-marked or over-marked. Such instances of unfairness bring the Board's examining procedures under fire and mobilizes them into action. A significant development in this respect has been the installation of computers at the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Karachi and Lahore for data-base management to avoid clerical errors and speed up processing of examination results. I have a feeling that development of standardized achievement tests for the Boards' examinations will be the next step and the initiative will come from the Boards themselves, not from the government. (13)

By now it must be clear that at present the issues of concern in Pakistan regarding assessment and examination procedures are not those of test labels (Anastasi, 1980; Ebel, 1980; Green, 1974; Jencks & Crouse, 1982) or of different test development procedures (Popham, 1971; Wright, 1968), or of the extent to which government regulation of testing is desirable (Fitzgibbon, 1981; Holtzman, 1981), but basically those of organization, management and funding. No doubt the above issues will arise once test development programs have started. Given that there is a climate of opinion in the country favorable to a change towards the use of more valid and reliable assessment procedures than the currently used essay-type examinations, the most important concerns at present are regarding test use (or misuse) and the effects a move towards standardized testing will have on classroom practices and student competency. Once appropriate measurement instruments have been developed how are they going to be used in large-scale testing programs and what implications the test results will have for individuals? Will they be used as a selective device like the eleven plus examination was in Britain in its heyday (Vernon, 1957), or like the SAT in the United States where test results are not crucial to admission decisions (Wigdor & Garner, 1982), or better still, will the tests be used for diagnostic purposes as Anastasi (1981) and Glaser and Nitko (1971) have suggested?

Already there is talk in Pakistan of a `lower' or `ordinary' level Secondary School Certificate examination for less academically inclined students who will not go on to further

education, and a `higher' or `advanced' level examination for those going on to college and university. In view of the fact that educational provision is not sufficient to meet the increasing demand for places, at least in the urban areas of the country, I suspect standardized tests will be used primarily as a convenient and often the sole selection device in Pakistan. Madaus and Greaney (in press) draw attention to the similarity between the screening function of a traditional examination of the past (The Irish Primary Certificate) and the current standardized competency tests in the United States. They also report finding considerable differences in the reading levels associated with the standardized minimum competency tests and remarkable consistency in reading levels across years for passages used in the Irish Primary Certificate "despite the fact that the tests were prepared by inspectors who had no formal training in measurement, psychometrics or equating techniques". So it seems that the use of tests and examinations will have to be watched as closely as their format and label.

The other major concern in Pakistan regarding the introduction of standardized testing is the backwash effect on classroom practices. It is true that the current external examinations do encourage cramming and selective study, but the worst fear about standardized testing is that it will only measure knowledge of isolated facts in multiple-choice or other objectively scorable formats, in which the students would select the correct answers rather than supply them. This, it is argued,

would discourage the development of writing and comprehension skills at the classroom level. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (1981) expressed a similar concern regarding the effects of standardized testing in the United States: "When doing well in most school contexts requires little beyond short responses, is it surprising that students fail to develop more comprehensive thinking and analytic skills?" (p. 2) At the same time, from the literature on the use of standardized test results by teachers in the United States, for developing instructional strategies, Datta (1982) concludes that "Teachers indicate continued reliance on their own observation and craft knowledge in the classrooms." (p. 62) Kellaghan, Madaus, & Airasian (1980) came to a similar conclusion in their study of the effects of standardized testing in Ireland: "While teachers seemed to like the tests and perceived a number of advantages as being associated with them, by and large the availability of norm-referenced tests and information did not substantially affect teachers' reported practices over a wide range of areas involving testing and evaluation." (p. 130) It would appear that in any program of changes in the examination procedures in Pakistan, utilization of teachers' assessment should not be excluded. Teachers would, of course, require training in using measurement skills and their judgments would have to be systematically monitored; nevertheless, this important resource for improving the assessment and examination procedures in Pakistan ought not to

be overlooked. In this way, Pakistan's late entry into the commonwealth of testing nations may turn out to be to its advantage, if it does not jump on any particular bandwagon and can learn from the rich and varied experiences of the veterans, which have been extensively, if not exhaustively documented.

FOOTNOTES

(1) I have purposefully not used the word British here because Scotland had developed and maintained its own educational traditions that were different, and some would argue, superior to the English traditions until the early twentieth century (Anderson, 1983; Davie, 1962).

(2) The dynamic relationship between the social context of language acquisition and thinking has been elaborated by Collison (1974), Bruner (1983), Sapir (1933), Vygotsky (1934/1962), and Whorf (1939). The effects of education in a foreign language on individual lives have also been tellingly described in works of fiction and autobiography set in India (Muggerdige, 1972; Scott, 1973).

(3) In the province of Sind where Karachi is located, the Boards conduct external examinations at the end of Classes IX, X, XI, and XII. In 1984, the Board of Secondary Education Karachi examined over 130,000 and the Board of Intermediate Education examined nearly 100,000 candidates.

(4) For example, the Social Studies curriculum for Sind would use names of locations and personalities from Sind, as well as national heroes and events. Similarly, in Science, local fauna and flora would be used as a starting point for studying the environment.

(5) A small number of schools in Pakistan continue to present candidates for the Cambridge University and London University examining boards' School Certificate and GCE examinations. The requirement of using textbooks published by the Textbook Boards in Pakistan does not apply to these few schools.

(6) In these debates, `objective' does not necessarily mean `standardized'. A test is considered to be `objective' if it can be scored with a pre-determined, single-answer key.

(7) From the Deputy Controller of Examinations to the peon who seals envelopes containing the question papers, anybody involved with this entire operation is not allowed to leave the duplicating area until after the examination is over at noon.

(8) Some good schools have always maintained cumulative records, but to what extent and how information from these records has been utilized is not known.

(9) The mark-sheets (transcripts) issued by the Boards provide the following information regarding the grading scheme employed by them:

A+	=	80% to 100%	Excellent
A	=	70% to 79%	Very good
B	=	60% to 69%	Good
C	=	50% to 59%	Average
D	=	40% to 49%	Below average
E	=	33% to 39%	Poor
F	=	less than 33%	Fail

(10) There has been very strong opposition to this proposal at all levels. Parents, teachers, employers and institutions of higher education have all written and spoken out against it, mainly on two related grounds: teachers' judgments in internal evaluation will be more subjective than in marking essay type examinations of the Board, and there will be no widely accepted yardstick as the Board's examinations are of evaluating students' performance. So far, the Board's Secondary School Certificate examination remains.

(11) The Provinces do get grants from the national budget, but the major share of the education budget for primary and secondary education in the public sector comes from provincial revenues.

(12) My own assessment is that funds have been provided only when individuals with interest and training in measurement have occupied important posts in the Federal Ministry of Education to push for funds. As Curle (1969) puts it, "What is done, as opposed to what is said, or formally planned about education, depends upon the interests of those in high positions in the political and administrative systems." (p. 110)

(13) The Education Boards are self-financing, semi-autonomous organizations, created by a government ordinance.

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